

A Brief Account of the Bahai Movement.

By COL. ARCHIE C. FISK.

In the coming of Baha-o'llah, with His forerunner, The Bab, and His "Branch" Abdul Baha, all the various prophecies of the different religions have been fulfilled, and in the Bahai movement, which emanated therefrom, is found the nucleus of that divine order of things which man has long expected.

On May 23, 1844, there arose in Shiraz, Persia, a young man, Ali Muhammad by name, who declared himself to be the Bab (door or gate) or the forerunner of "Him whom God would manifest,"—a great teacher, who was soon to appear with manifest signs of divine power, through whose teachings the religious unity of all people would be accomplished.

Through His purity of soul and spiritual wisdom the Bab drew unto Himself many followers, who in turn promulgated His doctrines with so much fervor that within a short time many believed and joined His ranks.

The Bab was immediately met by great opposition on the part of the Musulman clergy. He continued His teaching in order that they might be fitted to meet the Promised One.

The mission of the Bab being that of precursor of "Him whom God would manifest." With the appearance of the Promised One, the followers (Babis) were commanded to turn their faces unto Him, when He, who was to come, would reveal His teachings, divine laws and ordinances, thus completing the foundation of the Kingdom on Earth.

During the days of the Bab's ministry, while his cause was being promulgated by His followers throughout Persia, there were many believers— who had never met Him in person. Among these was Baha-o'llah, a young man of noble family, who warmly espoused the Bab's cause, publicly upholding and teaching it in Teheran.

In 1852, shortly after the Bab's martyrdom, when the persecution of the Babis was at its height, Baha-o'llah, with others of the new faith, was imprisoned, and later on with a number of Babis was sent in exile.

As the movement gained strength the Jerical authorities began to show fear. This led to an international arrangement made between the Turkish and Persian governments by which Baha-o'llah with a band of His followers were ordered to a more distant exile in Constantinople.

In April, 1862, on the eve of His departure for Constantinople Baha-o'llah declared Himself to be the One whose coming the Bab had foretold, "Him whom God would manifest." The followers of Baha-o'llah rapidly increased in numbers, and so steadfast were they in their faith that they would brave any danger, even death was welcomed in preference to a renouncement of their faith. Their numbers had become so great that the authorities were apprehensive, though the Babis proclaimed their mission to be one of peace. The exiles were sent to Adrianople and finally in 1868 to Acca (sometimes spelled Acre—Akka) at the foot of Mt. Carmel, where "the coming of the Lord" had been foretold by the prophets.

Baha-o'llah while in prison sent out tablets to rulers and great ones of the earth telling them who He was, and inviting them to investigate His claim, and come and enter into the Kingdom of God—through the gates which He was opening. The prophecy of this great invitation is found in St. Luke, chapter 14, beginning with the 16th verse: "And they all began with one consent to make excuse." These tablets revealed at this time "are matters of history."

Baha-o'llah was born in 1817, and in 1892 He departed from this earth and

ascended to the Heaven from whence He came. Nineteen years before His departure He revealed a New Testament, declaring His son, Abbas Effendi to be His successor.

The 23d day of May, 1844, is the day when the Campbellites, who had given away all their worldly possessions, robed themselves in white prepared to ascend to Heaven. It was on this same day that the Bab appeared, and it was also on this day that Abbas Effendi was born.

Abbas Effendi is in Acca fulfilling prophecy. He calls Himself Abdul Baha, which means the servant of Baha-o'llah. He writes many tablets, interpreting passages in the Bible and New Testament. In answer to some queries Abdul Baha replies, "Praise be to God that the divine cause of this Bahai dispensation is one of absolute love and of pure spirituality. It is not of this kingdom, the earth, for it is not war and distress, nor the oppression of one people by another. Its army is the love of God, its victory is the ecstasy of the knowledge of God: its battle is that of truth, the exposition of the Word, its warfare is against selfishness: its patience is its reserve; its entire meekness is its conquering power, and its love for all is a glory for evermore. In a word it is spirit and it is love."

Of the many martyrs to the cause, there is not space in this article to permit more than an allusion to one: a remarkable heroine who has been called the Joan of Arc of her country and age. She was the daughter of one of the leading Ulemas of Islam, a woman of culture and position, known as a poetess, philosopher, linguist and theologian. She early became a convert to the new movement, and, leaving her home, travelled about Persia, speaking, publicly making converts. Finally she was martyred by the Mohammedans.

This saintly woman, by her great courage has led the way for her sisters in the Orient, and a new era for women has commenced, for both the Bab and Baha-o'llah preached the emancipation of woman. Under this teaching woman assumes her rightful position as the equal of man.

Having given a brief historical account of the Bahai movement, I append an address which I recently delivered before the Bahai Assembly in New York City, which gives my personal views of what the movement stands for.

(To be continued)

The United States Monetary League

The United States Monetary League sends us an earnest appeal to the people of this country, urging everybody to take notice and assist in a general movement to prevent the destruction of some more millions of our greenbacks and silver money. During the first ten years of the "contraction period" hundreds of millions of our money was destroyed each year, so that money would be scarce and bring good interest, and the men who had plenty of money could rob other men who were in debt. Now the same element is making an effort to have the last of such money destroyed, and this warning is sent out as a "cry of alarm," a call to the people. The appeal says:

"There is a conspiracy planned, and unless you prevent it, the next Congress will burn up \$345,000,000 in greenbacks; and melt into bullion 600,000,000 silver dollars. This is your money. It is drawing no interest. It is to be destroyed, and in its place will be issued bank currency that can be expanded and contracted at pleasure, injuring the people by both processes, and drawing immense interest all of the time for doing it."

"This is a simple statement, but it is a plain one. A little money will buy paper for printing and postage for thousands of circulars that must be sent broadcast:

and they are asking that you write for blank petitions and circulate them so such a petition with millions of names can be presented to Congress, a great roll of names of the friends of honest money and the Republic.

Send contributions, or send for petition blanks to the following duly authorized Vice-Presidents of the League, or to the Secretary:

P. F. Adelbach, editor, Kingsburg, Cal.; L. E. Perkins, 1134 Josephine St., Denver, Colo.; F. S. Taylor, Walnut Springs, Texas; Deacon Donham, editor, St. Peter, Minn.; D. L. McKinnon, Marianna, Fla.; C. P. Warnock, Oxford, Fla.; Flavin J. Van Vorhis, Indianapolis, Ind.; C. J. Ramage, Saluda, S. C.; Webster Thomas, Dayton, Tenn.; Wilson, S. Mowry, Woonsocket, R. I.; H. L. Hutchinson, Cambridgeport, Mass.; S. G. Buchner, Buena Vista and Crown Sts., Corona, N. Y.; H. W. Lawrence, Box 733, Salt Lake City, Utah; F. C. Johnson, editor, Minneapolis, Kan.; Ezra Weaver, editor, Lancaster, Pa.; James D. Finch, Carson City, Nev.; H. A. Whitstone, McComb, Ohio; Wiley A. Latschar, Carlisle, Indiana. All friends should write for blanks. Jos. N. Stephens, Secretary U. S. Monetary League, 634 17th St., Denver, Colo.

The following is the Petition: "To the President of the United States and Members of the Senate and House of Representatives:

"We, the undersigned electors and citizens, respectfully represent:

"That we view with alarm the efforts that are being made to retire the \$345,000,000 of the United States notes, commonly called greenbacks; and to melt into bullion 600,000,000 of silver dollars now in circulation in the United States. These are now performing the function of a circulating medium and there is no justification for their retirement.

"The substitution of a bank currency therefore would be injurious to the nation, because it would place within the hands of the banking classes the power to contract and expand the medium by which payments are made and by which values are determined. The exercise of such a power by any one class is bound to be detrimental to the interests of the masses.

Therefore, we respectfully urge,

"1. That the \$345,000,000 in greenbacks shall not be destroyed.

"2. That the silver dollar be not eliminated from coinage and use, but the increasing demands of commerce for a circulating medium be supplied by increased coinage of both gold and silver and the issuance of legal tender paper money."

Those Forest Fires

Officials of the U. S. Department of Agriculture are of the opinion that 1910 will hold the record among many years for the severity of the losses from forest fires. Great spring fires were followed by summer fires that called for the efforts of three Federal Departments, several thousands of Federal soldiers being sent to assist the fire fighters. The total losses this year will amount to many millions, which includes rich national forests, state and private holding, great damage to town, farm and other property; and the railroads had large losses besides the interruption to traffic. A bulletin by National Forester Henry S. Graves, discusses forest fires and the methods of preventing and limiting them, from which we quote a few points. After saying their frequency often leads to the opinion that they cannot be prevented, he says, "they may not be entirely eliminated, but they can be kept down, or largely prevented, so the damage will be very small." Among the important provisions, is careful watch for fire, and sufficient force of trained men for job, as in fire departments, of the city. Careful supervision and patrol during

the dry season, lookouts, telephone, or signal communication, to notify the chief and call for help promptly. He refers to the methods of "whipping" out a fire by one man at the start, and of throwing sand or earth, but when the strong wind prevents anyone from attacking it in front, the fire can often be turned toward an open field or lake or stream by fighting the side at front, etc. Very much depends upon the skill and experience of the men, and especially the skill of the man who directs the work. Backfiring sometimes is necessary, but too many people get excited and burn a neighbor's property in a backfire, to save their own. These forest fires must be watched until the last spark is out, for a wind may spring up and soon the destruction begins again. This bulletin is interesting and full of information to those who know but little of a western fire on the prairie or in the forests.

Banks Will Win

A quiet announcement is made of an American enterprise about to be planted in Russia, that may be of greatest import in an international way, because "the borrower is servant to the lender," or soon will be. Nearly all the prominent wars of modern times are for this purpose. Anciently the conqueror, required tribute or taxes. Modern civilization is more refined, and collects interest, profit and rent. The wires report that:

"The establishment of an American banking institution in Russia is being seriously considered by a group of bankers of this country. It is understood that inquiries as to the demand for such an institution, as well as its chances for success, have been made by American commercial interests in Russia and Siberia. The cotton trade between American growers and Russian mill owners alone could be increased to a hundred million dollars a year, nearly double what it is now, it is said, with the aid of an American-owned and managed banking house to finance the transactions which are now indirect and go through Berlin or Paris. Such an institution would not be limited to ordinary banking transactions. The financing of the government railroads, municipalities, and the development of the natural resources of Russia would be undertaken."

At a recent meeting of its Board of Trade a plan was submitted outlining a program for making at Skowhegan, Me., the third largest water plant in New England. This involves merging the several water rights, as now established by deed, into one new corporation, the issue of one million dollars first mortgage five per cent bonds, and the expenditure of the proceeds in acquiring necessary property to build new dams, canals, and power station.

A demand for reparation, estimated at one million dollars, is being prepared for presentation to the interstate commerce commission by a number of merchants and manufacturers in the Missouri river territory, who assert that they have been defrauded by excessive railroad rates.

Soon after the United States had acquired Porto Rico by conquest in the Spanish-American war, negotiations were begun by Denmark for the sale of the Danish West Indies, St. Thomas, St. John, and Santa Cruz, to the American Government. Opposition to the sale developed, and the negotiations were dropped. Once more, however, they are offered for sale. The total area of the three islands is one hundred and thirty-eight square miles and the population in 1901, when the last census was taken, was 39,977, almost entirely negroes.